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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 001500

SIPDIS

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TAGS: MARR MASS MOPS YM COUNTER TERRORISM MARITIME SECURITY

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR NAVCENT COMMANDER - VADM NICHOLS

VISIT TO YEMEN 12-13 JUNE 05

Classified By: AMBASSADOR THOMAS KRAJESKI FOR REASONS 1.4 (a)

11. (S/NF) EMBASSY SANAA WARMLY WELCOMES THE VISIT OF NAVCENT COMMANDER, VADM NICHOLS, AND HIS STAFF JUNE 12-13. YOU WILL FIND THAT OPERATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING AND MARITIME COOPERATION BETWEEN USG AND ROYG IS INCREASING. YOU WILL MEET WITH DEFENSE MINISTER, MAJOR GENERAL ABDULLAH ALI ALAIWA, AND INTERIOR MINISTER, MAJOR GENERAL RASHAD AL-ALIMI. CHIEF OF STAFF (CHOD), MAJOR GENERAL MOHAMMED AL-QASSEMI MAY ATTEND IF HE IS AVAILABLE. YOU WILL ALSO MEET WITH COMMANDER OF THE YEMEN NAVY, BRIGADIER GENERAL RAWAIS ABDULLAH ALI MUJOWAR, AS WELL AS BRIGADIER GENERAL ALI ABDULLAH RASSA, DIRECTOR (CDR) OF YEMEN COAST GUARD. YOU WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT ADEN, TOUR ADEN HARBOR AND MEET WITH THE GOVERNOR OF ADEN, DR. YAHYA MOHAMMED AL-SHUAIBI.

12. (S/NF) YOU WILL FIND THESE ROYG OFFICIALS ANXIOUS TO DISCUSS WHAT THEY CHARACTERIZE AS INADEQUATE U.S. ASSISTANCE TO COMPENSATE YEMEN FOR IT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE GWOT. ONE OR MORE OF YOUR INTERLOCUTORS WILL LIKELY ASK YOU FOR USG ASSISTANCE TO EQUIP AND TRAIN AS WELL AS PROVIDE SPARE PARTS. THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO ECHO PRESIDENT SALEH'S MANTRA ("WE ARE FIGHTING YOUR FIGHT") THAT THE EFFORTS OF THE YEMEN MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES TO SUPPRESS THE AL-HOUTH "BELIEVING YOUTH" REBELLION IN VICINITY OF SA'ADA WAS DONE ON THE BEHALF OF THE USG, AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PART AND PARCEL OF THE GWOT. YOU SHOULD EXPECT THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR, AS WELL AS YCG DIRECTOR TO BE MORE FRIENDLY AND ANXIOUS TO WORK WITH US, THAN THEIR COUNTERPARTS FROM THE MOD. YOU CAN EXPECT GOVERNOR SHUAIBI TO ASK FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN BRINGING BACK U.S. MILITARY AND COMMERCIAL SHIPPING TO ADEN, THEREBY ASSISTING IN THE REVITALIZATION OF THE HARBOR.

PRESIDENT SALEH ON CT COOPERATION: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY?

13. (C) PRESIDENT SALEH'S MODUS OPERENDI ON MILITARY, NAVAL AND CT COOPERATION IS TO LEVERAGE SUCCESSES INTO FURTHER U.S. MILITARY AND SECURITY COOPERATION, INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND FOOD AID. PRESIDENT SALEH'S MINISTERS, NAVAL AND COAST GUARD COMMANDERS ARE WELL VERSED IN THESE TACTICS. SINCE 2001 PRESIDENT SALEH HAS DETERMINED THAT HIS INTERESTS LIE IN A PRO-U.S. STANCE IN THE GWOT. HE AND HIS MINISTERS OFTEN CLAIM, HOWEVER, THAT THE USG DOES NOT MATCH THE LEVEL OF COOPERATION WITH COMMENSURATE ASSISTANCE. IN FACT, ROYG CT COOPERATION IS SPOTTY, AND IS TINGED WITH MISTRUST, LEADING AT TIMES TO HOARDING OF INFORMATION. YOU MAY WANT TO PRESS YOUR INTERLOCUTORS FOR THE NEED FOR BETTER INFORMATION SHARING. USG REQUESTS FOR CT COOPERATION FROM YEMEN NEVER FAIL TO GENERATE DEMANDS FOR LARGE SUMS OF MONEY IN RETURN. WE CONSIDER PRESIDENT SALEH TO BE A MASTER BALANCER OF COMPETING INTERESTS AND HE WILL WEIGH ANY COOPERATION WITH THE USG AGAINST HIS INTERESTS IN APPEASING DOMESTIC TRIBAL AND ISLAMIST ELEMENTS.

TRAINING AND EQUIPPING ISSUES: WE GET THEM WHAT THEY NEED, NOT WHAT THEY WANT.

14. (S/NF) THE YEMEN NAVY (YN) DOES NOT ENGAGE WITH THE EMBASSY, CJTF-HOA, OR NAVCENT, EITHER BY POLICY OR OUT OF JEALOUSY FOR WHAT WE DO IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE YEMEN COAST GUARD. EXCEPT FOR THE NEW 37.5 METER FRENCH PATROL BOATS THEY RECENTLY RECEIVED (PURCHASED- NOT GRANT AID), THE YEMEN NAVY VESSELS GENERALLY DO NOT DEPLOY EITHER BECAUSE OF LACK OF SPARE PARTS, FUEL OR OPERATIONAL NECESSITY. THE YN DOES SEND A FEW SAILORS TO TRAINING IN THE U.S., UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM (IMET).

15. (S/NF) YEMEN COAST GUARD. THE YEMEN COAST GUARD (YCG) IS THE MARITIME CT SUCCESS STORY IN YEMEN. PART OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, THE YCG WAS FORMED JUST THREE YEARS AGO WITH NO EQUIPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE OR ASSIGNED PERSONNEL. THE YCG HAS MATURED INTO A SEMI-CAPABLE ORGANIZATION THAT IS SLOWLY EXPANDING ITS OPERATIONS AWAY FROM THE HOME-PORT CITIES OF ADEN AND HODEIDAH. MUCH OF THE YCG SUCCESS IS DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE GUIDING EFFORTS OF THE USCG PROVIDED MARITIME ADVISOR, CAPT BOB INNES, WHO HAS BEEN TDY IN YEMEN FOR OVER TWO YEARS. YCG IS CAPABLE OF LIMITED MIO/LIO OPERATIONS IN YEMENI TERRITORIAL WATER, AND HAS THE MISSION TO BE THE MARITIME DELIVERY MEANS FOR THE CENTRAL SECURITY FORCE-COUNTER TERRORISM UNIT (CSF-CTU). YCG IS RESPONSIBLE

FOR ALL WATERSIDE AND SOME LANDSIDE SECURITY OF OIL INFRASTRUCTURE. THE YCG HAS BEEN THE MAJOR BENEFACITOR OF YEMEN'S ALLOCATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY FINANCING (FMF) OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS. THE YCG REALIZES THAT THE USCG AND USN HAVE THE "GOLD STANDARD" FOR TRAINING AND EQUIPPING A MARITIME FORCE, AND THEY SEEK TO HARVEST THAT CAPABILITY.

16. (S/NF) CONTROLLING SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SA/LW). IN EARLY MARCH THE AMBASSADOR PRESENTED PRESIDENT SALEH WITH EVIDENCE THAT WEAPONS OSTENSIBLY PROCURED THROUGH OFFICIAL MOD CHANNELS WERE ENDING UP IN THE WRONG HANDS (E.G. TERRORISTS-SPECIFICALLY, THE JEDDA CONSULATE ATTACKERS). AT THE SAME MEETING, THE AMBASSADOR INFORMED PRESIDENT SALEH THAT THE USG HAD JUST STOPPED ONE SHIPMENT OF ARMS FROM SERBIA. PRESIDENT SALEH THEN PLEDGED TO STOP RELYING ON ARMS DEALERS TO EQUIP HIS ARMED FORCES. WE NEED A SOLID COMMITMENT FROM SALEH THAT THE ARMS TRADE WILL END. IT IS SIMPLY TOO DANGEROUS FOR OUR DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE IN THE REGION, FOR OUR TROOPS IN IRAQ, AS WELL AS FOR THE SALEH REGIME. WE ARE WILLING TO HELP HIM MONITOR THE FLOW OF ARMS, BUT WE EXPECT HIS POLITICAL WILL TO BE TOTALLY TRANSPARENT ON THE ISSUE. INTERDICTION OF GRAY OR BLACK MARKET WEAPONS BY NAVCENT OR COALITION SHIPS, ESPECIALLY IF THE WEAPONS ARE TRACEABLE TO YEMENI MILITARY PURCHASES WILL GREATLY AID OUR DIPLOMATIC POSITION.

17. (S/NF) PRESIDENT SALEH AND HIS MINISTERS COMPLAIN THAT THEIR ENEMIES CONTINUE TO PORTRAY THEM AS TOOLS OF THE AMERICANS. HE AND HIS TOP GENERALS SAY THEY ARE TAKING INTERNAL AND REGIONAL POLITICAL RISKS BY COOPERATING CLOSELY WITH THE U.S. SALEH COMPLAINS THAT IN RETURN, THE U.S IS VERY SLOW TO RESPOND TO HIS NEEDS FOR MILITARY HARDWARE, SPARE PARTS, TRAINING AND AID. EMBASSY SANA'A IS PREPARED TO RECOMMEND A MORE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH YEMEN, TO BE DISCUSSED WHEN SALEH VISITS WITH PRESIDENT BUSH LATER THIS SUMMER OR EARLY FALL, BUT WE WILL ADVOCATE THAT THE ROYG NEEDS TO MAKE SOLID AND VERIFIABLE COMMITMENTS ON COMPLETE TRANSPARENCY IN THE SHARING OF INTEL AND STOPPING THE ARMS TRADE. NAVCENT SUPPORT FOR THIS CARROT AND STICK APPROACH WOULD BE HELPFUL INDEED.

Krajeski